

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene, which comprises reacting 2-methyl-4-nitroaniline with ~~a chlorinating agent~~ t-butylhypochlorite in a neutral condition to obtain 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline and deaminating a reactant mixture containing the 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline to obtain 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene.

2. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 1, in which the reaction of 2-methyl-4-nitroaniline with ~~a chlorinating agent~~ t-butylhypochlorite is carried out in a solvent containing neither acid nor base.

3. Canceled.

4. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in Claim 1, in which the deamination is carried out by adding sodium nitrite to the reactant mixture adjusted to a temperature between room temperature and 0°C, allowing the reaction mixture to stand at an elevated temperature and then decreasing the temperature and ~~keeping it at~~ maintaining the temperature of at 40 to 50°C.

5. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing 3-chloro-5-methylphenylisocyanate, which comprises reducing 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene obtained by ~~any~~ the process as defined in Claim 1 to obtain a resulting product and reacting the resulting product with triphosgene.